BENGALURU, FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 2026 www.Bangaloremirror.com 12 Pages PRICE ₹3

Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 30 | Min 18 | Humidity 75% Clouds and sunshine Sensex 83,382 | Nifty 25,665 | Gold 1,43,620 | Silver 2,95,000 | Dollar 90.30 | Euro 105.00 | GBP 121.19

Pint pinch

CITY PAGE 5

Repeated price hikes may have caused Bengaluru to lose its taste for beer, slump in sales in 2025 suggests

Fun & frolic

CITY PAGE 6

Snapshots from the festivities: City experiences colourful rangoli, kite, pongal highs and glass manja lows

Doctors advise inculcating slow eating habits, portion control, having one meal at least with entire family after study confirms scrolling while eating has had devastating impact on young adults' health

FEEDING FRENZY ON OUR FEED

Ads for unhealthy foods, viral recipe trends disrupting eating patterns

Garima Prasher
garima.prasher@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

A class-V student of a prominent city school started experiencing a persistent urge to drink water over the last few months. The 12-year-old, who was also obese, started getting irritable before meals and suffered from increased urination.

When doctors went through her blood work, they found that the child had developed type 2 diabetes. When they reflected on her lifestyle, they found that the young girl had a practice of having her post-school lunch and dinner while watching television for hours.

Doctors say that while this was not the only cause, it was one of the factors that influenced her to overeat and also impacted her food choices.

This apparently is not an isolated case of an eating disorder due to increased screen time among young adults in Bengaluru.

A study conducted by researchers from ESIC Medical College and PGIMSR, Rajarajeswari Medical College and Hospital, and Dr MGR University on 394 adolescents studying in educational institutions in Bengaluru shows that nearly 50

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>

> **"Constant exposure to perfectly arranged food photographs can also inflate our expectations for our meals, leading to dissatisfaction and even disordered eating behaviours**
>
> — From the study

LATE FOR SCHOOL?

Circular directing each govt school to form panels to select agencies that will supply shoes, socks to students has come too late, warn activists

Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

The Department of School Education has finally released Rs 6 crore under the Vidya Vikasa Scheme to procure shoes and socks for students studying in classes 1 to 10 in government schools for the academic year 2025-26. Educationists are concerned that the order issued on January 13 directing the authorities to form a committee for each government school to select agencies to supply shoes and socks may delay the process.

The directive suggests formation of each committee with the president of school development and monitoring committee, headmaster, and three members nominated to the SMDC (selecting two women members is mandatory).

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>

INSIDE>> PG 2 Hark the water bell...

THINGS TO DO

01 Craft haven

Karigar Bazaar returns with its 2nd Edition, promising a larger and more immersive celebration of India's craft, culture, and community, bringing together master artisans, cultural performances, experiential workshops, and regional cuisines under one heritage destination. **Where: Jayamahal Palace Hotel; When: January 17 to 26, 11 am to 8 pm**

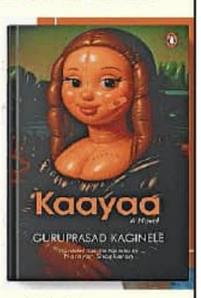
02 Eat, drink, be merry

The Drawing Room by Smoke House Deli brings back Wild West Fridays, a celebration of live music, easy conversations, and soulful evenings. Known for her soulful voice and easy presence on stage, Sabrina G Price brings a warm, feel-good energy to the evening. **Where: The Drawing Room by Smoke House Deli, Indiranagar; When: January 16, 8 pm**

03 Jam session

Windmills presents a two night live showcase by Naima Farao Quartet, featuring one of Europe's most compelling contemporary voices in nu jazz and alternative soul. **Where: Windmills, Whitefield; When: Jan 16 and 17, 9.30 pm**

04 Book buzz



Atta Galatta is hosting the launch of Kaayaa, a searing and honest meditation on beauty, ambition, and the human condition, which reaffirms Guruprasad Kaginele's voice as one of the most compelling in contemporary Kannada literature. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: January 17, 6 pm**

05 Artistic legacy

As part of BLR Hubba, the Department of Horticulture, Heritage Beku, and Rumale Art House will present Cubbon Park Blossoms, a guided nature and art walk, starting at Bal Bhavan. The walk brings alive the legacy of legendary painter Rumale Chennabasaviah, weaving together stories of art, memory, and nature. **Where: Cubbon Park; When: January 16, 8 am**

Water bells to encourage hydration among students

New circular mandates bell reminders to ensure students drink water at regular intervals, noting lack of awareness among children regarding importance of good hydration habits

Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

To promote healthy hydration habits among schoolchildren, the Director of the PM-Poshan Scheme in Karnataka has directed all schools to introduce a 'water-bell' system.

Issued on January 14, the circular highlights the lack of awareness among children about the importance of drinking water at regular intervals and stresses that timely reminders can help improve metabolism, prevent dehydration-related problems, and encourage participation in sports. The directive mandates implementation of the system across government, aided and unaided schools for students from LKG to Class 10.

Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights Chairman Shashidhar Kosambe, on November 26, 2025, wrote to the Commissioner of the School Education Department urging the issuance of a circular to introduce water-bell systems in all schools across the state.

Kosambe said he visited several schools last year and observed that students often failed to drink water at regular intervals due to limited awareness of its importance. "I discussed this issue with teachers of the respective schools. I wrote a letter to the Commissioner of School Education Department to introduce water bells in schools to remind children to consume water," he said.

Authorities must ensure adequate drinking water facilities in schools and implement circular effectively so it does not remain on paper but truly safeguards students' health, says child rights activist

Nagasimha G Rao, a child rights activist, said that school development and monitoring committees should ensure drinking water for school children. "Issuing a circular to introduce a water-bell system is not important but providing a water bottle, along with school uniforms, shoes, and socks, to each student is very important. There is no drinking water at many government schools in rural areas," Rao said.

Emphasising the need for effective implementation of the water-bell system, child rights activist HC Raghavendra said authorities, including headmasters and teachers, must ensure adequate drinking water facilities in schools. "The circular should not remain on the paper. It has to be implemented effectively to ensure students are healthy," he said.

Historic forest lands face uncertain future

A recent order of the Karnataka High Court concerning the legal status of the Kadugodi plantation has triggered alarm within the state's Forest Department, with officials warning that the ruling could have far-reaching consequences for forest protection in Karnataka. Internal assessments indicate that the interpretation adopted by the court may cast doubt on the legal validity of several historical forest notifications, potentially impacting nearly nine lakh acres of land that have long been treated as forest areas. These lands were notified during the pre-Independence period and have remained under forest administration for over a century.

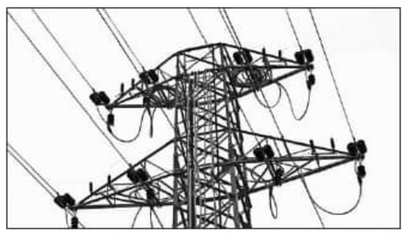
The case revolved around an 1896 notification declaring the Kadugodi plantation as forest land. The High Court held that the notification could not be relied upon, as it was not issued by the Chief Commissioner of the Madras Presidency, who was considered the competent authority at the time. This finding has unsettled forest officials, who point out that administrative powers had been delegated to the Diwan during that period, raising questions about the correctness of the conclusion.

Forest officials fear that if the reasoning in the Kadugodi case is applied more broadly, it could weaken the legal status of plantations and forest tracts across multiple districts. **— BMB**

Revenue deficit sparks proposal to hike electricity tariffs

Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (BESCOM) is staring at a massive Rs 2,800 crore revenue shortfall, part of a statewide Rs 4,900 crore gap reported by Karnataka's five ESCOMs for 2024-25. The shortfall, driven by higher-than-expected costs for power purchase, interest and operations, has led the companies to submit a proposal to Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC) for revising electricity tariffs from April.

Sources said that the commission is currently reviewing the ESCOMs' petition and may issue a decision after examining the details. Without an adjustment,



BESCOM and other ESCOMs warn of operational and financial strain, which could affect electricity management across Bengaluru and other regions.

BESCOM officials have highlighted that Bengaluru, being the largest consumer base, accounts for the biggest share of the shortfall, making the proposal particularly significant for the city. While the tariff revision is only under consideration, the company has indicated that any changes will be carefully evaluated to balance the needs of industrial, commercial, and household consumers. **— BMB**

Citizens demand affordable fares for Bengaluru metro

The Save Bangalore Committee (SBC) and the Bengaluru Metro Commuters' Association (BMCA) have strongly condemned any proposal to increase Namma Metro fares, including a possible 5 per cent hike reportedly anticipated in February 2026. In a joint statement, the groups said a fare hike at this time would place an unfair burden on daily commuters who are already struggling with rising inflation and economic pressure. They pointed out that the proposed increase would come barely a year after a steep 71 per cent fare revision, which had already strained regular metro users.

The organisations rejected the Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited's (BMRCL) justification that a hike is unavoidable due to recommendations by the Fare Fixation Committee and provisions under the Metro Rail Act, 2002. They argued that these recommendations are advisory in nature and do not override the metro authority's responsibility to safeguard public interest. SBC and BMCA urged the metro administration to explore alternative revenue sources such as better commercial use of metro property and improved operational efficiency, instead of passing costs on to commuters. They pointed out that higher fares could push people back to private vehicles, worsening traffic congestion and pollution.

The groups demanded an immediate halt to any fare hike and said they would mobilise public opinion and pursue democratic means to oppose the move, stressing that the metro must remain an affordable public service, not a luxury. **— BMB**

RCB set to skip Bengaluru this time around?

Even if cricket returns to the M Chinnaswamy Stadium, Royal Challengers Bengaluru may not. Strong signals now suggest that RCB will move its home matches out of Bengaluru for the 2026 IPL, with two games already confirmed for Raipur. Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai's public announcement and the RCB CEO's meeting with him have virtually sealed the deal, while Navi Mumbai's DY Patil Stadium is likely to host the remaining fixtures. Behind the move lies a mix of safety concerns, legal complications and image worries following last year's deadly stampede. With the case still in court and public sentiment sensitive, the franchise appears keen to avoid fresh controversy. **— BMB**

Five held for armed robbery

Five persons, including two juveniles involved in a legal conflict, have been arrested by the Kengeri police for their alleged involvement in an extortion case in which a couple was threatened with deadly weapons and robbed. The police have seized two autorickshaws, three two-wheelers, cash, and silver ornaments worth Rs 10 lakh.

According to the police, the complainant, a resident of the Kengeri sub-division, lodged a complaint on December 22, 2025. He stated that while he and his wife were travelling in an autorickshaw near an apartment on the Bengaluru–Mysuru Road in the early hours, two unknown persons on a two-wheeler blocked their vehicle, threatened them with a knife, and snatched Rs 1 lakh in cash and a gold ring.

During the investigation, the police detained three accused on January 3, 2026, from Ramohalli and seized an autorickshaw, a two-wheeler, and Rs 5,000 in cash. The accused reportedly confessed to their involvement in the extortion and disclosed their links to several other crimes, including murder.

On January 5, 2026, two juveniles were arrested at Hegganahalli Cross and later sent to a government remand home in Madiwala. Further seizures were made between January 5 and 7, including vehicles and silver ornaments from a vacant plot in Byadarahalli limits. **–BMB**

CRIME FILES

Chain snatcher arrested, gold worth ₹2 lakh recovered

The HSR Layout police have arrested a man in connection with a gold chain snatching incident and recovered a 33-gram gold chain valued at Rs 2 lakh.

According to the police, the complainant lodged a complaint on December 31, 2025, stating that on the same morning, after offering prayers at the Ganesh temple on 22nd Main Road, HSR Layout, he was returning home via 23rd Main Road, 7th Cross, when an unknown person arrived on a two-wheeler and snatched the gold chain weighing about 33 grams from his neck before fleeing the spot.

Following the complaint, a case of chain snatching was registered at the HSR Layout Police Station, and a detailed investigation was taken up. Based on specific information, the police took a suspect into custody near his residence in Neelasandra, Vivekanagar, on January 9, 2026. During interrogation, the accused confessed to committing the crime. He also revealed that the stolen gold chain had been sold at a jewellery shop in Neelasandra.

On January 10, police seized the 33-gram gold chain from the jewellery shop. The accused has been remanded to judicial custody. **–BMB**

Massive fire engulfs scrapyard, no casualties reported

A fire broke out at a scrapyard in Mailasandra, within the limits of Begur Police Station, in the early hours of Thursday. Fortunately, no casualties were reported in the incident.

According to the police, the fire erupted around 3 am, allegedly due to an electrical short circuit at the scrapyard. At the time of the incident, four temporary sheds had been erected at the site by migrant workers. All the workers managed to escape in time and were unharmed.

Fire and Emergency Services personnel were immediately alerted and rushed to the spot. Firefighters battled the flames for nearly four hours before bringing the blaze under control, preventing it from spreading to nearby areas. However, the sheds and scrap materials stored at the yard were gutted in the fire, causing significant property damage.

Police officials said that a similar fire had occurred at the same location last year. Following that incident, families residing in the surrounding locality had already been relocated to safer places as a precautionary measure. A case has been registered, and further investigation is underway to ascertain the exact cause of the fire. **–BMB**

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Man fined ₹1.11 lakh for modified car silencer

In an unexpected enforcement action, the Hennur Traffic Police imposed a hefty fine of Rs 1.11 lakh on a student for illegally modifying the silencer of his car, which was causing public disturbance. Ironically, the value of the car itself is estimated to be only Rs 70,000.

The violator, a student and a native of Kerala, was driving along Hennur Road on January 2 when passersby alerted the police after videos of the car emitting flames and producing deafening noise surfaced on social media. According to documents, RTO officials fined a penalty of Rs 1,11,500, which the student paid on Wednesday, following which the vehicle was released. **–BMB**

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Cauvery phase VI delay clouds city's water future

Bengaluru's water future is once again under a cloud, with the State government yet to approve the long pending Cauvery Phase VI project aimed at quenching the thirst of the city's rapidly expanding outskirts. The Rs 6,939 crore proposal, cleared at the planning level nearly nine months ago, is still awaiting a final nod, triggering fears of a deeper water crunch in coming years.

The project is crucial for layouts on the city's fringes and nearby suburbs including Devanahalli, Hoskote, Nelamangala and Chikkabanavara, areas that have witnessed explosive growth but remain poorly served by piped water connections. Bengaluru already depends heavily on Cauvery water and borewells, even as groundwater levels continue to fall sharply because of unchecked urbanisation.

At present, the city draws about 29 TMC of water from the Cauvery, with Phase VI expected to allow an additional six TMC. Of this, four TMC has been earmarked for new city layouts such as Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout and Shivarama Karanth Layout, while the remaining two TMC will be supplied to surrounding towns through the rural drinking water department.

BWSSB officials say the detailed project report is ready and work can begin immediately once government approval comes through. However, with the Yettinahole project still uncertain and the Cauvery allocation nearly exhausted, any further delay could leave Bengaluru facing another summer of empty taps and tanker dependence. — BMB

Hejje-Gala drives corporate walking, cycling across city

Three-month Hejje-Gala initiative mobilises corporates, records walking, cycling trips, supports employee health, lowers emissions, strengthens Bengaluru's active mobility ecosystem

Bangalore Mirror Bureau
mybangaloremirror
@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Hejje-Gala, a three-month corporate active mobility challenge aimed at encouraging walking and cycling across Bengaluru, was launched on Thursday, bringing together senior government officials and corporate leaders to promote sustainable commuting. The city-wide initiative seeks to strengthen a culture of active mobility across major employment hubs, while supporting employee well-being and reducing traffic congestion and carbon emissions across the city.

The challenge was formally launched by Maheshwar Rao M, Commissioner of the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), along with Manivannan P, Commissioner of the Bangalore Development Authority. Over 40 corporate leaders and senior government officials participated in a symbolic two-kilometre walk from Vidhana Soudha to the GBA Head Office, collectively clocking nearly one lakh steps to underline the message and spirit of Hejje-Gala.

Led by WRI India in partnership with Urban Morph and Walkaluru, Hejje-Gala focuses on encouraging companies to actively involve their employees in recording walking and cycling trips. These trips can either be full commute options or first- and last-mile connections to public transport systems. The initiative places special emphasis on the role of corporate leadership in driving participation and visibility across Bengaluru's five city corporations.

> **"I'm pleased to see active participation of corporates, ORRCA, ELCIA and WEPPIA, and together, we will build better pedestrian and cycling infrastructure in our city** – Maheshwar Rao M, Commissioner, GBA

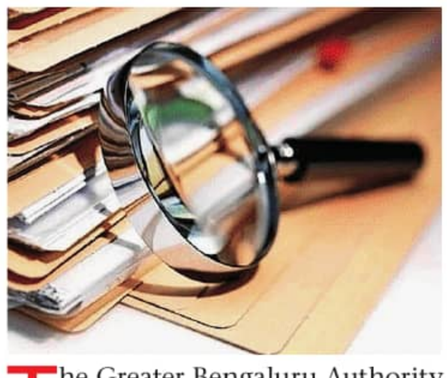
Speaking at the launch, Rao said the city administration is on a mission to improve footpaths across Bengaluru and that Hejje-Gala offers an opportunity to create a healthy competition between the five city corporations. He said he was pleased to see the active participation of corporate groups and associations such as ORRCA, ELCIA and WEPPIA. Together, he said, these efforts would help build better pedestrian and cycling infrastructure and empower citizens to use public transport. He added that inputs from the challenge would be leveraged to address issues on priority and improve street design.

Participating organisations will be able to track collective performance through dashboards and leaderboards that capture kilometres walked or cycled and estimate emission reductions, while ensuring individual privacy is protected. These aggregated metrics can also support companies in strengthening their Environment, Social and Governance reporting.

Pawan Mulukutla, Executive Program Director at WRI India, said active mobility is essential in reimagining Bengaluru as a vibrant city with inclusive commute options for all. Urban Morph founder Satya Sankaran said the initiative makes active mobility measurable, while Walkaluru founder Arun Pai noted that everyday commuter feedback could help identify unsafe stretches and priority improvement areas.

Companies have been invited to register on hejjegala.in, with insights from the challenge expected to guide improvements such as safer crossings, better footpaths and comfortable cycling routes across Bengaluru.

Door-to-door survey targets tax dodging owners



The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has launched a door-to-door survey to identify property owners evading property tax by providing false or incorrect information, with notices already being issued to violators. Around 22 lakh properties fall under the property tax net in the capital, where owners pay tax under the self-assessment scheme. Authorities found that several owners had misreported details, leading to tax evasion, prompting the authority to physically verify every property through an extensive field survey.

Survey Drive

A GBA official said, "The survey is being carried out across the five municipal corporations under the Greater Bengaluru Authority, covering 369 wards. One surveyor has been assigned to each ward, and they will conduct the exercise over the next three months, collecting and recording property data within their respective areas. Based on this information, verification teams will check whether property declarations made by owners are accurate. If false or misleading information is confirmed, notices will be issued and owners will be directed to pay the pending tax amount."

Digital Tracking

A dedicated mobile application has been developed for the survey. Through the app, surveyors will capture geo-location details of each property, photographs, number of floors, nature of use—whether residential or commercial—property dimensions, and whether the structure is old or newly constructed. Officials said satellite imagery of all city properties is already available, and survey data will be cross-verified with these images before matching it with tax payment records.

Daily Targets

GBA officials said that each of the 369 surveyors has been given a target to survey at least 50 properties a day. This translates to around 18,000 property surveys daily, enabling the authority to complete verification of all properties in Bengaluru within three months.

Revenue Dip

Property tax collection has seen a decline of nearly 15 percent compared to last year. By January in the 2024–25 financial year, the city had collected Rs 4,448 crore, while in the current financial year, collections stand at Rs 3,760 crore. Officials said continuous verification of property tax payments is under way to improve compliance. Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao said the revenue department is closely monitoring collections, and inspections will continue across the city.— BMB

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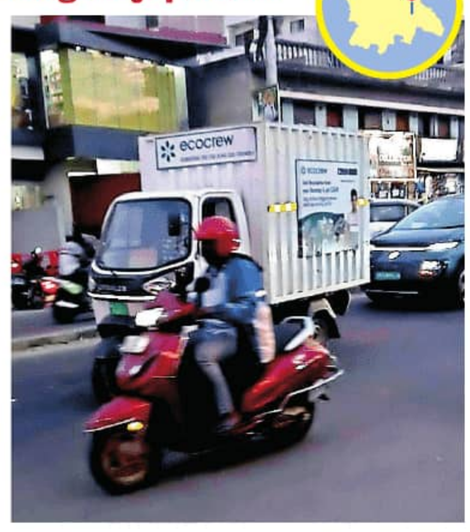
Road safety

Rajajinagar

Old unsafe vehicles run unchecked on Rajajinagar roads due to traffic and RTO negligence.

Traffic hazard

Lingarajapuram



Heavy traffic on the Hennur Road flyover at Lingarajapuram poses serious risks to pedestrians due to missing marked crossings, underscoring the urgent need for designated crossings and speed breakers.

Footpath failure

Viveknagar

The footpath on 4th Main Road in Viveknagar has deteriorated drastically within just 90 days, sparking concerns about poor workmanship, lack of accountability, and increasing inconvenience for daily pedestrians.

Bengaluru's beer crown slips as prices bite hard

Steep hikes trigger dramatic sales collapse, exposing shifting drinking habits across statewide outlets

Sridhar.Vivan
@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @sridharvMIRROR

Once-busy beer sections appear subdued across Bengaluru amid persistent price pressures

Excise data reveal 2025 declines after consecutive increases, with patrons reducing purchases, while spirits volumes remain resilient, signalling preference changes citywide among urban consumers nationally

Bengaluru was often called the 'Beer Capital of India', but is it slipping? A sharp fall in beer sales in 2025 suggests that the city's long-standing love affair with beer may be under pressure, largely due to repeated price hikes. According to official excise data, beer sales in Karnataka dropped significantly in 2025, with sales lower by 77.95 lakh cases compared with the previous year, bringing total sales down to 392.77 lakh cases.

Sales slump

In 2023, total beer sales stood at 444.05 lakh cases, with each case containing 7.80 litres. This number rose to 450.36 lakh cases in 2024, showing modest growth. However, 2025 saw a steep decline, with sales falling to 392.77 lakh cases. Industry observers attribute this drop primarily to consecutive increases in beer prices, which have made the drink significantly costlier for consumers.

An excise department official said: "Month-wise figures point to a sustained slowdown, with January recording the sharpest fall at 30.7 per cent, followed by a modest 5.6 per cent decline in February. March sales dropped by 15.5 per cent, April by 16.3 per cent, and May saw a steep contraction of 26.8 per cent. June registered a 13.8 per cent fall, July declined by 22.5 per cent, and August by 23.7 per cent. September saw a 12.5 per cent reduction, October a 10.3 per cent dip, November a 14.3 per cent fall, and December the smallest decline at 3.9 per cent, taking the overall annual drop to about 12.8 per cent."

IML uptick

Interestingly, while beer sales have taken a hit, Indian Made Liquor (IML), which includes whisky, brandy, rum and gin, has shown a marginal recovery. In 2023, total IML sales stood at 705.53 lakh cases. This dipped to 700.09 lakh cases in 2024. In 2025, however, sales improved slightly to 703.69 lakh cases. Month-wise data show that IML sales have largely remained stable or even increased in several months. For instance, January IML sales rose from 57.74 lakh cases in 2024 to 60.61 lakh cases in 2025. March saw an increase from 57.07 lakh cases to 64.19 lakh cases, while December rose from 61.82 lakh cases to 63.71 lakh cases, indicating a shift in consumer preference.

Reacting to the trend, Y Kallesh, who owns liquor stores, said beer prices were increased once about a year ago and again six months later. Together, these hikes pushed up beer prices by nearly 50 per cent, making beer significantly more expensive and directly impacting sales. Lakshman Gowda, who also owns a liquor shop, added that the steep rise in beer prices is the main reason for the fall in sales, as consumers are clearly cutting back.

While beer prices rose by an estimated 50 per cent over two hikes, beer volumes fell by over 17 per cent in a single year. Meanwhile, IML, which did not see such sharp price shocks, managed to hold ground and even post marginal gains. Excise department officials said the data suggest that Bengaluru's beer drinkers are either drinking less, shifting to other forms of alcohol, or stepping away altogether.

Cops head to court over transfers

Sub-inspectors across Karnataka are preparing to challenge the state government's inter-district transfer policy in the High Court. Frustrated by years of stalled transfers and what they describe as discriminatory rules, PSIs have even formed a WhatsApp group to co-ordinate support and collect contributions for the legal battle, which has already received backing from more than 100 officers.

The 2022 policy, which sets minimum service durations for couples and ex-servicemen, has left PSIs feeling sidelined, with promotions and seniority being overlooked. More than 1,500 officers from the 2010–2020 batches are affected, with inconsistent rules applied to constables and sub-inspectors. PSIs argue that principles of natural justice have been ignored, and that repeated appeals to senior officials have failed, leaving the courts as their only recourse. **–BMB**

Death by negligence case quashed

The Karnataka High Court has set aside a conviction recorded by a Sessions Court in a case of alleged death by negligence, holding that the State Government had approached a court that lacked jurisdiction to hear the appeal against acquittal.

The case stemmed from a State appeal before the Sessions Court against a trial court order acquitting the accused of offences under Sections 279, 337, 338 and 304-A of the IPC. The Sessions Court reversed the acquittal and convicted the accused, K Keshava, who then approached the High Court, arguing that the Sessions Court lacked jurisdiction as all the offences were bailable and, under Section 378 of the CrPC, such appeals lay only before the High Court.

The prosecution defended the conviction, but Justice G Basavaraja held that appeals against acquittal in bailable offences must be filed before the High Court, not the Sessions Court. Since the State had approached the wrong forum, the Sessions Court's order was without jurisdiction and an abuse of process. The High Court set aside the conviction and restored the trial court's acquittal, noting that the Sessions Court had also failed to give proper reasons for reversing it. **–BMB**

PAGE 12

Priyanka's fierce pirate avatar: Blood-soaked sands witness Priyanka Chopra battling ruthless pirates for survival and hidden treasure

ಎಕ್ಸಲಂಟ್ ಕೋಚಿಂಗ್ ಕ್ಲಾಸಿಸ್
ಆಶ್ರಮ ರೋಡ, ಆದರ್ಶ ನಗರ, ವಿಜಯಪುರ
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SUMMER VACATION-2026
(Eng & Kan Med)
Admissions Started for
IV&V
Sainik/Navodaya/Kittur/RMS Coaching
Maths, English, IQ & GK
VI to X
(Mathematics, Science & English Grammar)
2024-25 Result
Sainik School
State 2nd Rank Chiranjivi BJ Bengaluru
State 3rd Rank Arav Heddurshetti Hukkeri
State 4th Rank Satvik Mohite Vijayapur
State 6th Rank Sampreeth Patil Agashal
State 7th Rank Arnav Sangam Vijayapur
State 7th Rank Satvik Baligar Belagavi
State 8th Rank Khushi Rathod Vijayapur
State 9th Rank Aadish Rathod Bagalkot
State 9th Rank Pranav Madabhavi Vijayapur
State 10th Rank Pratik Jiddimani Bilagi
RMS
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SANKRANTHI SCENES: Cow jumping rituals in the outskirts; the first sun rays bless the Shiva idol at Gavi Gangadhareshwara Temple on the eve of Sankranthi festival; women make pongal

Sunlight on Sankranthi Gangadhareshwara lingam

Bengaluru's historic Sri Gavi Gangadhareshwara Temple once again drew devotees, scholars, and astronomy enthusiasts on Makar Sankranti, as the annual Surya Abhisheka unfolded on Thursday evening. Around 5.30 pm, a rare celestial alignment allowed the sun's rays to penetrate the cave temple and fall directly on the Shiva Lingam, marking the transition of the sun from Dakshinayana to Uttarayana. For a few silent minutes, devotees watched in awe as the intense light illuminated the deity, a phenomenon that has fascinated generations.

Priests performed abhishekam using tender coconut water and milk during the brief alignment, symbolically cooling the Lingam as the sun's rays touched it. Often described as an open-air astronomical laboratory, the temple is believed to have been built by Kempe Gowda and reflects remarkable scientific precision in its design. On Sankranti, sunlight travels through a carefully aligned arch and windows, passes between the horns of the stone Nandi, and finally reaches the sanctum.

Scientific studies have documented this precise solar trajectory, noting that the rays originate from the south-west and follow a fixed architectural path. Researchers identified astronomical markers, underscoring the temple's blend of faith, architecture, and science, inspiring study, devotion, and awe for the generations. **–BMB**

Deadly manja persists in B'luru despite ban, triggering alarming injuries

Banned Chinese kite strings resurface at city events, injuring people and wildlife as weak enforcement undermines a decade-old prohibition

Bangalore Mirror Bureau
mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com
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Despite the Karnataka government's decade-long ban on the sale and use of Chinese manja, the killer thread continues to be used unabated for kite flying across the city.

A kite-flying event held on January 11 offered a telling snapshot of the problem, with several visitors arriving with spools of thread coated with glass or other harmful substances, despite clear restrictions. The Avian and Reptile Rehabilitation Centre (ARRC), a city-based animal welfare NGO, said it collected nearly 10 kilograms of banned manja from the venue, even though the event permitted only plain cotton thread.

"While only cotton thread was allowed at the festival, many people turned up with non-cotton or banned threads. We recovered around 10 kg of banned manja at the entrance. Along with the organisers, we ensured that none of it entered the festival area. Many participants voluntarily handed it over once they were informed about the ban," said Subiksha Venkatesh, lead wildlife rehabilitator at ARRC.

The continued presence of Chinese manja comes despite repeated government notifications. In October 2024, the Karnataka government reiterated the prohibition on Chinese dor or manja and other synthetic kite-flying threads coated with glass or harmful materials. The state had first imposed a total ban in 2016, citing the severe risks posed to birds, animals and people. Nearly a decade later, however, enforcement remains patchy and public awareness limited.

"The ban has not been very effective. On the ground, enforcement is virtually absent, and the burden of response falls largely on NGOs through rescues, while the string continues to be sold and used," Venkatesh said. She stressed that the issue extends beyond wildlife. "Nylon manja can seriously injure children, pedestrians and two-wheeler riders, with devastating consequences. This is not just a bird issue. Before more lives are lost, authorities need to act with conviction, with clear protocols, action at manufacturing and sale points, and sustained public awareness."

NGOs stress that without strict checks at manufacturing and sale points, banned manja continues circulating freely

Despite repeated bans, illegal manja continues to circulate in Bengaluru, causing rising animal rescues and fatal human injuries, exposing gaps in enforcement, awareness, and accountability across manufacturing and sales chains

Animal welfare groups report a sharp rise in manja-related injuries in recent years. ARRC alone handled 302 such rescue cases in the first 14 days of 2026, averaging more than 21 cases a day. On January 13, the organisation rescued 32 animals injured by manja, followed by nearly 30 rescues the next day.

Concerns have also been amplified by incidents involving human casualties. Animal welfare workers pointed to the recent death of a 48-year-old man in Bidar on January 14, who was killed after a manja slit his throat while he was riding a motorcycle.

People for Animals (PFA) Wildlife Hospital reported attending to 72 manja-related bird rescues between January 1 and January 14. Both ARRC and PFA said they are running awareness programmes across the city, engaging with children, residents and shopkeepers to explain why manja is illegal, how injuries occur and what safer alternatives can be used.

Experts have repeatedly warned that bans on paper mean little without consistent enforcement and community engagement. They emphasise that strict implementation, combined with easy channels for citizens to report violations, is essential to bridge the gap between policy and practice on the ground.

Fast-Track policy speed industry approvals

Starting a business in Karnataka has become significantly simpler with the State government rolling out a fast-track industrial clearance system aimed at attracting investment and generating employment. Under the new policy, industrial licences will be issued within 15 days for 58 non-polluting sectors, provided the units are set up on plots smaller than one acre in KIADB-developed industrial areas. Entrepreneurs can submit self-certified applications online, following which empanelled experts will conduct site inspections and clear proposals within two weeks. Sectors covered include solar equipment manufacturing, medical devices, tea processing and sports goods. Industry Minister M B Patil said the initiative is intended to reduce bureaucratic delays, curb corruption and offer a transparent, time-bound approval mechanism, reinforcing Karnataka's broader Ease of Doing Business reforms and positioning the State as a more investor-friendly destination. **–BMB**

Govt staff cry foul over Sanjeevini

The Karnataka Arogya Sanjeevini scheme, introduced to provide cashless treatment to government employees and their families, is facing strong opposition from beneficiaries. Employees allege that many empanelled private hospitals are either refusing treatment or offering only limited care, citing delays in government reimbursements. They also claim that the scheme's reimbursement rates are far lower than actual medical expenses, forcing patients to bear significant out-of-pocket costs. Adding to the discontent are compulsory monthly deductions, ranging from ₹250 to ₹1,000, levied even on employees who have formally opted out. With the earlier medical reimbursement system withdrawn, employees say they are left without viable alternatives. Employee unions have urged the government to restore reimbursement options for those opting out and address serious implementation gaps urgently. **–BMB**

Safari ban batters eco-tourism economy

The prolonged suspension of wildlife safaris in Bandipur and Nagarahole Tiger Reserves since November 7–8 has triggered a severe economic downturn across Karnataka's key eco-tourism belt, with industry bodies warning of mounting revenue losses, job risks and ripple effects on local livelihoods. The Karnataka Eco-Tourism Resorts Association (KETRA) estimates that resorts, homestays and tour operators in the Bandipur–Nagarahole–Kabini landscape are together losing nearly ₹3 crore daily due to cancellations during the peak season. In addition, safari-linked earnings of Jungle Lodges and Resorts and the Forest Department are down by an estimated ₹60–70 lakh a day.

Occupancy fell to 30-40%, risking 1,200-1,500 jobs; KETRA seeks science-based review, noting regulated safaris follow norms and avoid conflict zones, warning of severe revenue losses and livelihoods impact. **–BMB**

Bureaucratic blunder declares living Karnataka farmer dead

Revenue error leaves Belagavi farmer officially dead for five years, forcing Lokayukta intervention

Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Issuing death certificates to people who are very much alive appears to have become an alarming and recurring problem within Karnataka's revenue administration. The latest such case has drawn the attention of the Upa Lokayukta, highlighting systemic lapses that continue to cause severe hardship to ordinary citizens.

In a suo motu action, Upa Lokayukta Justice B Veerappa has taken cognisance of a grave administrative error that resulted in a farmer being officially declared dead for nearly five years. The case has been registered against Bailhongal Assistant Commissioner Praveen Jain, Savadatti Tahasildar Mallikarjun Heggannavar, Revenue Inspector RS Patil, and Sutagatti Village Administrative Officer Neela Murugod. The matter has been posted for February 23, with directions issued to all the accused officials to submit an action taken report by that date.

Farmer battles records proving he's alive

The proceedings were initiated based on media reports detailing the ordeal of Erappa Nagappa Abhayi, a 53-year-old farmer from Sutagatti village in Belagavi district. Erappa was forced to travel to Bengaluru to prove that he was alive after discovering that revenue records had erroneously listed him as deceased.

According to the complaint, the error occurred on July 8, 2021, when Erappa approached the village administrative office to obtain a death certificate for a deceased family member. Instead of issuing the certificate correctly, the village administrative officer mistakenly recorded Erappa himself as dead in the revenue records. Unaware of the error, Erappa continued with his life as usual, only to discover the blunder nearly five years later.

The issue came to light when Erappa applied for an irrigation subsidy of 3 lakh, only to be informed that he was ineligible as official records showed him as deceased. Despite approaching revenue authorities for rectification, he was allegedly told that the error could not be corrected locally and required intervention from higher authorities in Bengaluru.

The Upa Lokayukta has now sought accountability, raising serious questions about administrative negligence and the safeguards in place to prevent such life-altering errors.

Suo motu probe by the Upa Lokayukta has exposed grave lapses in Karnataka's administration after a 53-year-old agriculturist from Belagavi was wrongly marked deceased while seeking a certificate for a relative, costing him government benefits and forcing intervention from top officials

SOCIALTATTLE

THAT WENT VIRAL

Kiran Kumar S @KiranKS · 4h
Do a simple thing today. Go for a walk in middle class Bengaluru areas. Not apartments, not villas, just simple 20 or 30 feet roads.
You will be so happy to see Makara Sankranti rangolis.
I saw hundreds during my morning walk. Hindu women are so gifted and talented
19
123
982
13K

A social media user's post about a walk through middle-class Bengaluru lanes this Sankranthi revealing hundreds of beautiful rangolis, reflecting tradition, creativity, and the quiet artistic talent of women who keep festive culture alive has received many likes.

Usually choked with traffic, the Outer Ring Road saw rare relief during the Sankranthi holiday, surprising commuters with smooth rides and showing how reduced vehicles can transform Bengaluru's roads.

WHAT'S TWEETING

Minu @twittominu · 3h
Nearing to Choodasandra circle the entire footpath is hijacked by vendors. And also exactly on the circle a lot of garbage and hoardings. Could you please clean up the entire area. This been pending for long.@comm_blr_south @GBA_office @ChristinMP_

A social media user flagged vendor encroachment on the Choodasandra Circle footpath, highlighting how pedestrians are forced onto busy roads due to shrinking walking spaces.

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Shoes, socks must reach students by June: Activists

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The circular states that the selection committees have to ensure the agency supplies shoes and socks for Rs 265 for each of the Class 1-5 students, Rs 295 for each student of Class 6-8, and Rs 325 for each student of Class 9-10. It is said the process of procurement and distribution has to be completed in three months, which means by April.

Shoes and socks are supposed to be supplied along with school uniforms. The delay in release of funds, and order to form committees to select agencies has invited criticism from child rights activists.

Nagasimha G Rao, a child rights activist, said that it would be truly beneficial for school children if the shoes and socks reach them at the appropriate time. "If school uniforms, shoes, and textbooks are distributed right from the very first day of school, it would reflect a thoughtful decision made in the best interest of the children. The initiative to form committees at the school level to verify the quality of these shoes is highly commendable. However, including student representatives (children themselves) in these committees would truly honour children's right to participation and give real value to their voice," Rao said.

He said that special attention must be paid to children with disabilities by providing them with suitable, customised footwear. "Without such arrangements in the coming years, the goal of inclusive education will remain incomplete and meaningless. As emphasised in Article 27 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), everything provided to children — including clothing and other essentials — must be of good quality and adequate to support their overall development. Therefore, it is essential to supply durable shoes that children actually like and will happily wear for a long time," he said.

He said that authorities should not forget that uniforms, shoes, and textbooks given by the government are not mere charity but fundamental rights of every child. "Ensuring timely, high-quality, and inclusive distribution of these items is not just a responsibility but a commitment to upholding children's dignity and right to a proper standard of living. Only then can we truly build an equitable and child-centered education system," he said.

Advising the authorities to take measures to supply shoes and socks on time, Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (KSCPCR) Chairman Shashidhar S Kosambe said that he hopes the authorities will take measures to ensure timely distribution from next academic year.

Expressing the similar opinion, KSCPCR member Dr Thippeswamy KT said the authorities must ensure distribution of shoes and socks in June itself. "Issuing a circular to disburse shoes and socks in January is too late," he said.

Eating habits of 50% of those surveyed influenced by social media

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

percent are influenced by social media in their eating habits.

Among 394 adolescents, many nibbled when surfing social media without realising how much they had eaten, some ate a dish published on social media despite being full, and many of these students in the age group of 10 to 19 years also believed that foods /dishes with more likes/shares on social media are healthier.

The study also found that intake of fast food and cook-chill foods rose among the young adults when they were using social media; many adjusted their diet based on shared news or photos and videos regarding dishes they saw on social media. They also took more time to eat while browsing.

Experts say advertisements for fast food and unhealthy snacks are also prevalent on social media platforms, which may encourage consumers to make rash eating choices.

"Constant exposure to perfectly arranged food photographs can also inflate our

expectations for our meals, leading to dissatisfaction and even disordered eating behaviours. To maintain a healthy relationship with food, it is important to be aware of the influence social media can have on our eating patterns and make educated decisions," noted the study.

City-based healthcare experts say eye-catching food advertisements claiming health benefits and viral recipe reel trends have tempted young adults to try new things, which are highly processed and often categorised as junk food.

Consuming food while scrolling social media or watching television has become a common practice among the young population. However, this can lead to excess consumption of food, causing health issues. "Scrolling on your phone while having your meal can disrupt your brain-gut access, which can lead to overeating and cause major health issues and weight gain," said an expert.

"Social media has also contributed to eating disorders. Quick shortcut weight loss reels for body detoxification recipes with false claims are commonly observed. One common symptom we have observed among patients who visit us for weight loss is stress-related binge eating. They also get influenced by the 'before-and-after health journey' reels on social media sites and end up dealing with insecurity and mental health issues such as anxiety and overthinking," said Aditi Prasad Apte, Senior Clinical Nutritionist, Aster RV Hospital.

Doctors advise inculcating slow eating habits, portion control, having one meal at least with the entire family to distract young adults from social media, a strict no-phone and TV policy while having meals, and limiting social media usage throughout the week as some measures to correct eating disorders.

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I, Komal Mukeshkumar Pathak D/o, Pathak Mukeshbhai R/o Flat No F2204, Candeure Signature Apartment, varthur, Bangalore 560087 have changed my name to Pathak Komal Mukeshbhai for all purposes.

SUNIL Ronald S/o Vincent A , R/o: L No 7th Street , Door 6 , Ashok Nagar Bangalore Changed My Name as Sunil Ronald V

I, Sushma Bangalore Veerabhadrachar D/o Late Veerabhadrachar R/o A-101 Grand Gandharva Apartment, Rajarajeshwarinagar, Bengaluru - 560098 have changed my name to Sushma Tejas Badiger vide affidavit dated 14-01-2026 sworn before Notary S R Thulasikrishna, Bengaluru.

I, Vinodhkumar .N S/o Nagaraj .B R/o No-75, Maruthi Layout, Chamundinagara, devinanjayanapalya, Kittana - halli Bangalore-562130 have changed my name to Vinod Kumar.N for all purposes.

I, Mubarak Pasha S/O, Aslam Pasha R/o No 781/1, 2nd Main 5th Cross Gangondanhalli Bangalore 560039 have changed my name to Mubarak Sharif for all purposes.

I Vasantha Dasimaiah W/o Ramesh R/o 764/28 SLV Layout Arishinakunte Bangalore Rural-562123 have changed my name to Vasantha.

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HEALTH TIP: Milk acts as an effective winter moisturiser, reducing skin dryness and improving overall skin softness and health

Leafy greens like spinach and kale support weight loss by boosting satiety, fibre, and nutrients

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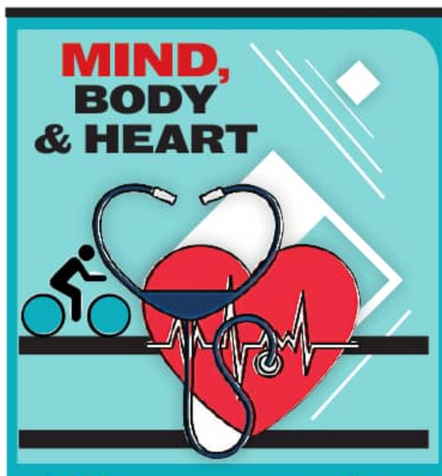

All you need to know about...

Ayurvedic Digestion

Daily work stress, a sedentary lifestyle, and unhealthy eating habits such as irregular meal timings, overeating, or eating on the go can weaken the digestive system and gradually reduce gut health. As a result, people may experience gas, bloating, indigestion, abdominal pain, diarrhoea, and other gastric issues. Digestion plays a crucial role in determining overall health. Whether consumed as a brewed decoction or added to daily meals, certain Ayurvedic herbs can significantly improve digestion.

Cumin: Commonly used in Indian households, cumin seeds help relieve bloating and gas. They possess anti-inflammatory properties that reduce stomach discomfort and pain. Cumin water stimulates digestive enzyme secretion, speeds up digestion, and supports gut health. It is also believed to ease some pregnancy-related discomforts.

Fenugreek: Rich in fibre and antioxidants, fenugreek acts as a natural digestive by flushing out toxins. Its lubricating properties soothe the stomach and intestinal lining. Drinking fenugreek water on an empty stomach may also aid weight loss.

Cardamom: Often eaten after heavy meals, cardamom's aroma stimulates digestive enzymes, improves intestinal movement, and helps relieve constipation, indigestion, and gas.

Ginger: Known for its pain-relieving, digestive, and immunity-boosting compounds, ginger soothes an upset stomach and is widely used in Indian cooking, especially in winter.

Turmeric: A staple in Indian cuisine, turmeric offers anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, antibacterial, and digestive-healing properties, making it a key Ayurvedic remedy for gut health. —Femina

SESAME SEEDS MAKE WINTER COMEBACK

Ancient sesame wisdom returns as winter's natural fuel for immunity

Iffath Fathima
@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

As winter sets in, sesame seeds, once a quiet staple of traditional Indian kitchens, are finding renewed attention this time on social media feeds. From nutritionists and dietitians to wellness influencers, many are urging people to add til (sesame) to their winter plates, calling it an ancient superfood perfectly suited to modern health needs.

Nutrition experts point out that sesame seeds are naturally thermogenic and rich in healthy fats, antioxidants, calcium, and iron nutrients that support energy levels, joint health, and immunity during colder months. Rooted in traditional food wisdom linked to festivals like Makar Sankranti, Lohri, and Pongal, the humble sesame seed is now being reframed as a winter essential.

Suparna Mukherjee, Clinical Nutritionist and Dietitian at Narayana Health City, Bengaluru, said, "Nutrient-wise, sesame seeds are among the best sources of quality fatty acids and protein. Also, as winter approaches, the body's resting energy expenditure (REE) changes as it goes into overdrive to create more body heat (thermogenesis). Monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fatty acids found in sesame seeds are very rare. These fatty acids act as a 'slow-burn' fuel to give a constant energy boost that guards against drowsiness and lethargy typical of winter. Apart from the caloric content, sesame has sesamin and sesamolin, two distinct compounds known to have strong antioxidant properties."

Nutritionists say that including about two tablespoons of sesame seeds in the daily diet during winter can help support sustained energy and maintain body warmth. "During winters, the metabolism slows down, so to provide sustained energy and support body temperature regulation during cold weather, we should include a daily intake of 2 tbsp or 20 g of seeds in our diet. They are a good source of healthy fats — about 4.8 g of MUFA and nearly 5 g of omega-6 fatty acids. Sesame seeds are also an excellent source of plant-based protein, around 6 g, making them beneficial for muscle maintenance and overall metabolic health in winter. They are also packed with essential minerals such as calcium, iron, magnesium, and phosphorus. Calcium supports strong bones and joints, while iron helps prevent seasonal fatigue and supports optimal oxygen transport in the body. Their high content of lignans (sesamin and sesamolin) and phytosterols helps lower 'bad' LDL cholesterol and supports heart health. These compounds, along with zinc and selenium, support immune health by reducing inflammation and protecting cells from oxidative damage, which is especially important during winter when immunity tends to weaken. The dietary fibre, about 5 g, promotes healthy digestion and helps prevent constipation, a common winter complaint," said Dr Prachi Chandra, Lead Clinical Nutritionist, Sakda World Hospital, Bengaluru.

January harvest festivals such as Makar Sankranti have long supported health by matching seasonal foods with the body's needs during peak winter. When dryness is high and immunity is low, eating sesame-based foods helps naturally supply essential minerals that strengthen the immune system. "Festive foods made with sesame provide vital nutrients like zinc, selenium, and magnesium, which are crucial for T-cell production and immune strength. Long before supplements existed, these traditions acted as a natural safeguard against seasonal illnesses," said Mukherjee.

WINTER WELLNESS BENEFITS OF SESAME

- Help keep joints and bones strong, reducing joint pain, knee stiffness, and back discomfort common in winter
- Rich in calcium, magnesium, and healthy fats that lubricate joints and improve mobility
- Provide long-lasting energy through healthy fats and protein, helping fight winter fatigue
- Support slower winter metabolism by offering sustained nourishment without heaviness
- Improve digestion by preventing internal dryness and reducing constipation during colder months

Source — Dietician Sadia

How to consume sesame seeds in winter

- Roasted sesame seeds (1–2 tsp daily)
- Sesame laddoo or chikki (small portion)
- Add to vegetables or salads
- Sesame chutney
- Use sesame oil for cooking or tempering

Source — Sadia

MIRRORLIGHTS

Memory loss can suddenly speed up with age

A large international brain study has provided new insight into why memory declines with age, showing that the process is driven not by damage to a single brain region or gene, but by widespread structural changes that accumulate across the brain over time.

By analysing more than 10,000 MRI scans and over 13,000 memory assessments from 3,700 cognitively healthy adults, researchers examined how memory performance changes alongside brain structure across adulthood. The data were pooled from 13 long-running studies, making this one of the most comprehensive efforts to date to understand healthy brain ageing.

The findings reveal that memory decline becomes more pronounced as brain tissue shrinkage increases, particularly later in life.

While the hippocampus—long known for its role in memory—showed the strongest association with memory loss, many other brain regions were also involved. Both cortical and subcortical areas contributed, pointing to a distributed vulnerability rather than isolated damage in one structure.

Importantly, the relationship between brain shrinkage and memory decline was not linear. People who experienced faster-than-average brain atrophy showed much steeper declines in memory, suggesting that once structural loss passes a certain threshold, its cognitive impact accelerates.

This pattern appeared across multiple brain regions, reinforcing the idea that memory decline reflects large-scale, network-level brain changes.

—ANI

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JAYATEERTH MEVUNDI
BHUVANESH KOMKALI
Content narrator (in Marathi and Hindi) :
Dr. Dhanashree Lele
Mandar Puranik - Tabla | Dnyaneshwar Sonawane - Harmonium | Sukhad Munde - Pakhwaj | Sunil Kumar - Flute | Suryakant Surve - Additional Rhythms
Sunday, 1 February 2026, 5.30 pm onwards
Chowdiah Memorial Hall, Malleswaram, Bengaluru
Tickets available on bookmyshow Few Seats Reserved

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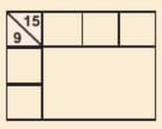
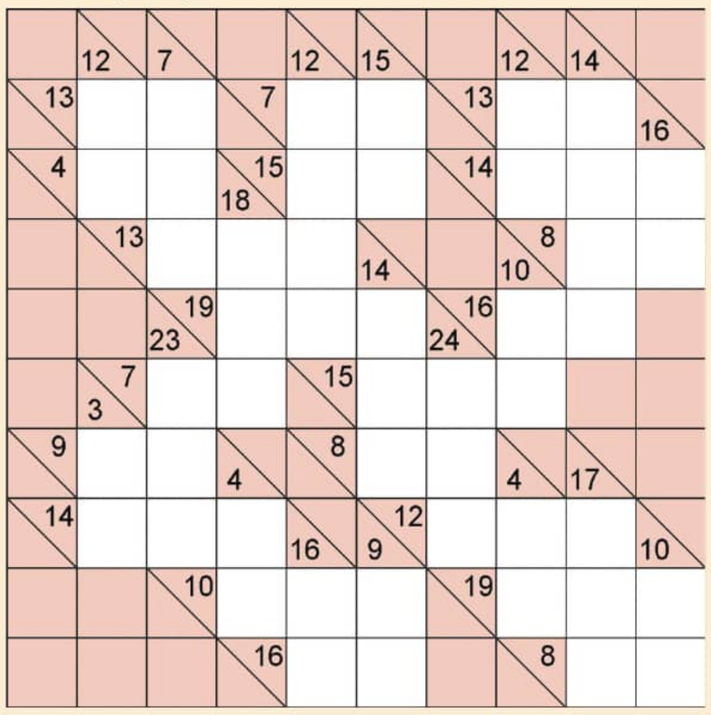
Kakuro

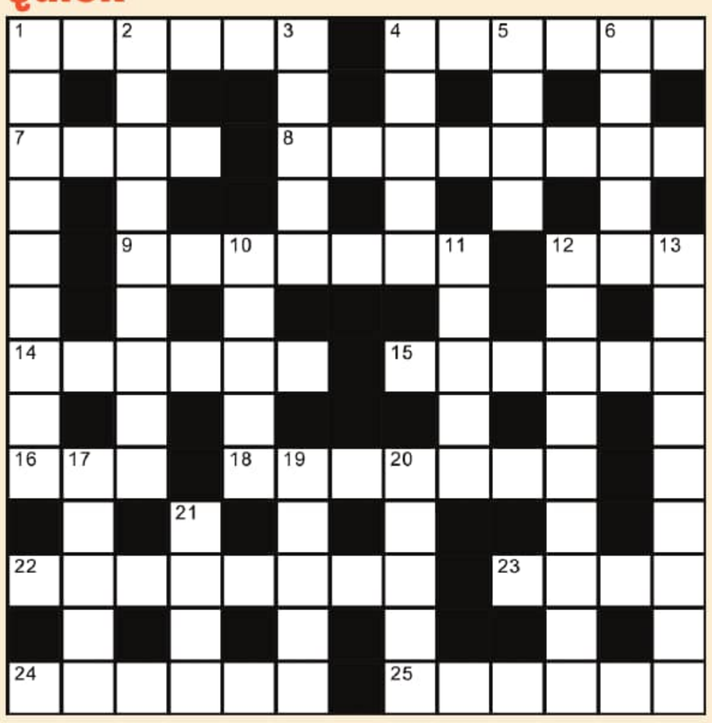
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Think of or consider (6)
4 P in BBMP (6)
7 Defrauds (4)
8 Taking as one's own (8)
9 Start of a football match? (4-3)
12 Letters to end a theorem (3)
14 Cream cake (6)
15 Jeans? (6)
16 Beam of light or a boy's name (3)
18 Retaliate against or punish? (3,4)
22 Southern US state (8)
23 Peru native (4)
24 Spain of the Spaniards (6)
25 Wax cylinder with wick (6)

DOWN

1 Story teller (9)
2 Star of An American in Paris (4,5)
3 ___ under the table : outlasted another in alcohol consumption? (5)
4 Convincing evidence (5)
5 Allows (4)
6 Norwegian currency (5)
10 Sound like a bird? (5)
11 Norse goddess of love (5)
12 Made more rapid or accelerated (9)
13 Utterly dissimilar, radically different (9)
17 Psychic phenomena (5)
19 Between ports (2,3)
20 Comp. language (5)
21 Greek goddess of the earth (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: E EQUALS G

DTT TQTYNMUOZE, XQTYKXXR I EYTIM GTIK, WXYYTWM I KOMMKT.

Linemaro

The speaking hat has spoken and it says 'I belong with you'

Mindchow

Do something. If it works, do more of it. If it doesn't, do something else

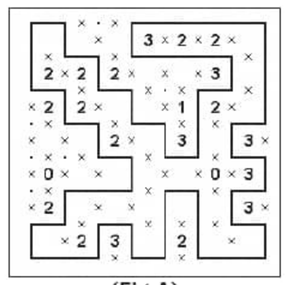
Joke of the day

There are two types of men in the world: The good and the bad. The good sleep better, but the bad seem to enjoy the waking hours more

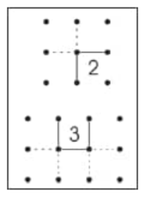
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)

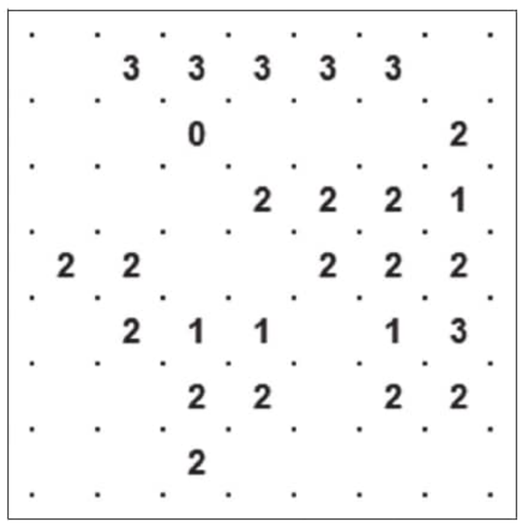


(Fig B) Not Allowed

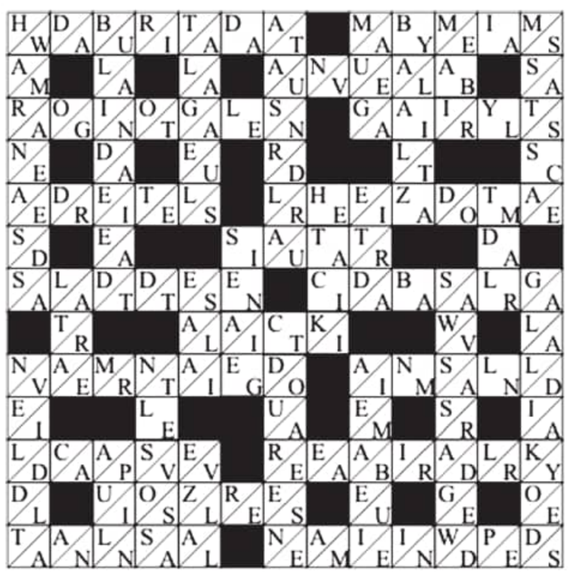
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



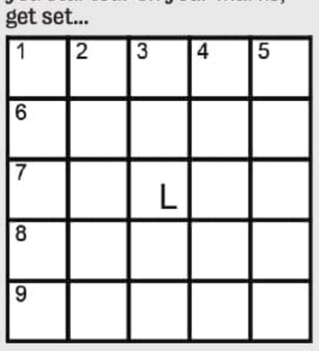
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

1 Topes; 6 New Ax; 7 Oldie; 8 Go vie; 9 A prep

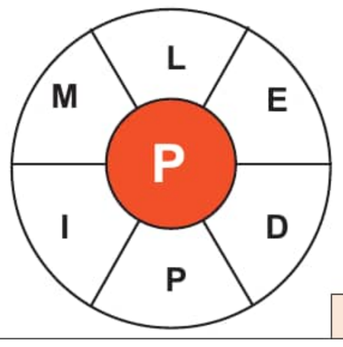
DOWN

1 Woo SP; 2 A gait; 3 Pi lox; 4 Vee PE; 5 E nerd

Mensapuzzle

Which letter replaces the blank and completes the wheel?

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

10 Average; **11** Good; **13** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

				3				
	9	3				4	7	
6	8		2		5		3	9
	3		4		9		5	
1								8
	5		7		1		6	
9	2		1		3		8	4
	7	4				6	1	
				2				

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 4

3 4 5 6

Medium = 10

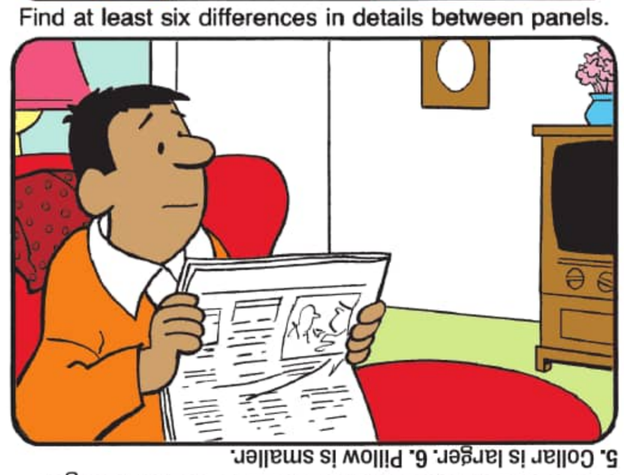
3 6 8 9

Hard = 4

2 4 5 7

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



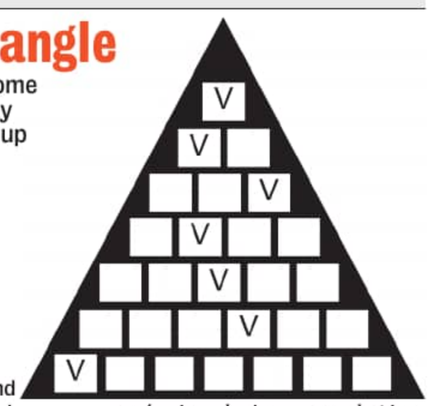
Differences: 1. Fingers are lower. 2. Newspaper photo is reversed. 3. Mouth is different. 4. TV screen is larger. 5. Collar is larger. 6. Pillow is smaller.

Riddler

Sometimes you'll find me hard and cold, Other times I'm hard to hold, Always present in the air, If I'm ever gone, beware. What am I?

Alpha triangle

1 Five in ancient Rome
2 May 8, 1945: _ Day
3 Accelerate, with up
4 Finished
5 Channel port
6 Herds
7 Sellers

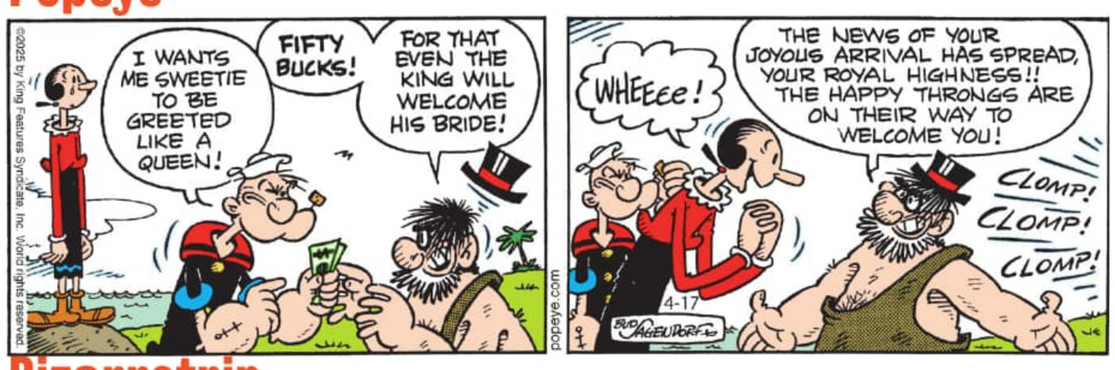


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS

Popeye


I WANTS ME SWEETIE TO BE GREETED LIKE A QUEEN!
FIFTY BUCKS!
FOR THAT EVEN THE KING WILL WELCOME HIS BRIDE!
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WHEEEE!
THE NEWS OF YOUR JOYOUS ARRIVAL HAS SPREAD, YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS!! THE HAPPY THRONGS ARE ON THEIR WAY TO WELCOME YOU!
CLOMP! CLOMP! CLOMP!
4-17
popeye.com

Bizarrotrip

Dist. by King Features BIZARRO.COM
©2025 BIZARRO STUDIOS
Wayno & Piraro 10-7-25
In these disguises, we can move about undetected on Lumber Centauri.
THE FLANNEL FRONTIER

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

IF THERE'S GONNA BE AN AGE LIMIT FOR TRICK-OR-TREATING, 12 IS TOO YOUNG!
THEY HAVEN'T EVEN REACHED TEENAGE YEARS. THEY SHOULD BE ABLE TO HOLD ON TO THEIR YOUTH AT LEAST UNTIL THEY'RE 14.
YEAH!
THAT'S RIGHT!
HEART OF THE CITY © 2025 AUDREWS MCMEEL
AND IF YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME, LET'S TALK ABOUT THE COMMUNITY CENTER AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM YOU ALL VOTED TO CLOSE LAST YEAR.
SPEAK ON IT, SKY!!
WOO!
GO BIRDS!
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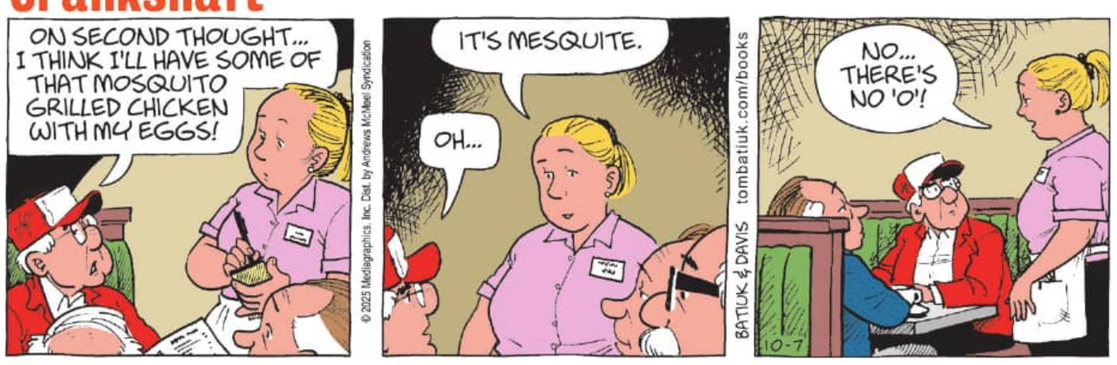
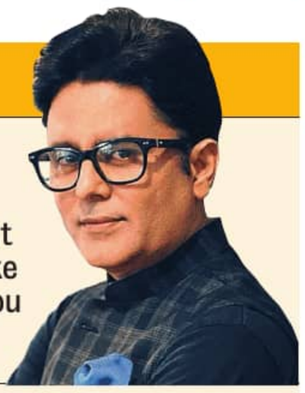
Crankshaft


ON SECOND THOUGHT... I THINK I'LL HAVE SOME OF THAT MOSQUITO GRILLED CHICKEN WITH MY EGGS!
IT'S MESQUITE.
OH...
NO... THERE'S NO 'O'!
© 2025 Mediagraphics, Inc. Dist. by Andrews McMeel Syndication
tombatiuk.com/books
BATIUK & DAVIS
10-7

Mutts

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR



If it's your birthday today

A year focused on home, emotional release, and family connections awaits. Renovations, moves, or improving your domestic environment will bring great comfort. Allow yourself to process old feelings to make space for new joy. By creating a secure inner and outer sanctuary, you empower your future growth and well-being.

Aries Mar 21–Apr 20

New income ideas emerge clearly today, encouraging confident planning. Efforts toward wellness bring uplifting progress. Your calm nature earns affection. Man age family emotions patiently and travel mindfully.

Taurus Apr 21–May 20

Healthy routines reward you with renewed vitality. Work advances smoothly and increased responsibility brings respect. Thoughtful financial decisions support future security. Study motivation grows.

Gemini May 21–Jun 21

Quick action benefits financial matters today. Dedication to disciplined habits strengthens well-being. Professional visibility increases and inspires confidence. Family moments feel thoughtful and joyful.

Cancer Jun 22–July 23

Support arrives when needed, helping goals move forward. Balanced care improves well-being. Work becomes easier with steady focus. Family encouragement strengthens confidence. Travel plans form happily.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23

Focusing on well-being brings refreshing clarity. Professional recognition grows as your talents shine. Family harmony deepens. Memorable travel moments await. Property blessings unfold through timely opportunities.

Virgo Aug 24–Sep 23

Someone close experiences encouraging improvement, uplifting your spirit. Managing expenses wisely brings comfort. Work flows positively and strengthens confidence. Academic insights become clearer with guidance.

Libra Sep 24–Oct 22

Enjoying treats brings joy when balanced with healthy habits. Financial support uplifts academic pursuits. Your efforts shine at work. Family cooperation resolves domestic matters smoothly. Travel brings excitement.

Scorpio Oct 23–Nov 22

Energetic motivation keeps your day active. Financial progress arrives through timely payments. Clarity returns to tasks with gentle focus. Helpful advice brings understanding. Family travel may feel rushed.

Sagittarius Nov 23–Dec 22

Balanced wellness practices keep you strong. Financial gains brighten your day, especially in valuable trades. Steer clear of workplace tension. Loved ones bring joy. Travel requires prompt planning. Property ventures feel favourable and filled with promise.

Capricorn Dec 23–Jan 20

Consistent fitness habits uplift your energy. Investment decisions become clearer. Your advice supports others meaningfully. Caring for elders deepens family harmony. Fresh ideas inspire new ventures.

Aquarius Jan 21–Feb 19

Improved routines strengthen wellness. Financial planning becomes important and rewarding. Work brings leadership opportunities. Family harmony increases through patience. Travel unfolds comfortably.

Pisces Feb 20–Mar 20

Mindful care maintains excellent health. Finances stabilise with encouraging improvements. Kind communication enhances workplace harmony. Family gatherings bring warmth. Adventure adds excitement.

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Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M

$-2^{-1} = -1/2$
$9^{-1/2} = (1/9)^{1/2} = 1/3$
$2^{-2} = (1/2)^2 = 1/4$
$(81^{1/4})^{-1/2} = (81)^{1/12}$
$= (3^4)^{-(1/2)} = 3^{4/12}$
$= 3^{1/3} = \sqrt[3]{3}$

BULL'S EYE

dimple, impel, limp, limped, pled, pile, plied, pimple, piped, pled, plied

STRIKE OUT

H	A	B	I	T	A	T	■	A	B	E	A	M	■	■
A	■	A	■	U	■	V	U	L	A	■	A	■	■	■
R	O	N	T	G	E	N	■	G	I	R	L	S	■	■
N	■	D	■	D	■	■	■	T	■	■	S	■	■	■
E	D	I	T	S	■	R	H	I	Z	O	M	E	■	■
S	■	E	■	S	A	A	R	■	■	A	■	■	■	■
S	A	D	D	E	N	■	C	A	B	A	L	A	■	■
T	■	■	L	■	L	A	C	K	■	W	■	L	■	■
V	E	R	T	I	G	O	■	I	N	A	L	■	■	■
I	■	E	■	A	■	M	■	■	R	■	A	■	■	■
L	A	P	S	E	■	R	A	B	I	D	L	Y	■	■
L	■	I	S	L	E	S	■	U	■	E	■	E	■	■
A	N	N	A	L	■	E	M	E	N	D	E	D	■	■

FAST FIVE

S	T	O	P	E
W	A	X	E	N
O	I	L	E	D
O	G	I	V	E
P	A	P	E	R

QUICK

R	E	G	A	R	D	■	P	A	L	I	K	E	■	■
A	■	E	■	R	■	E	■	R	■	I	■	■	■	■
C	O	N	S	■	A	D	O	P	T	I	O	N	■	■
O	■	E	■	N	■	O	■	S	■	N	■	■	■	■
N	■	K	I	C	K	O	F	F	■	O	E	D	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	R	■	■	R	■	U	■	I	■	■
E	G	L	A	I	R	■	D	E	N	I	M	S	■	■
U	■	L	■	R	■	■	■	N	■	■	■	P	■	■
R	A	Y	■	P	A	Y	B	A	C	K	■	A	■	■
A	R	K	A	N	S	A	S	■	I	N	C	A	■	■
■	■	■	U	■	G	■	T	■	■	E	■	R	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	A	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
E	S	P	A	N	■	A	■	C	A	N	D	L	E	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	I	■	■	■	E	■	T	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

MENSA PUZZLE

F. Moving clockwise, letters decrease in value from U in steps of 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

RIDDLER

Water

QUOTE UNCODE

See everything, overlook a great deal, correct a little.

SUDOKU

8	1	5	6	2	4	3	9	7
3	7	4	5	9	8	6	1	2
9	2	6	1	7	3	5	8	4
4	5	2	7	8	1	9	6	3
1	6	9	3	5	2	7	4	8
7	3	8	4	6	9	2	5	1
6	8	7	2	4	5	1	3	9
2	9	3	8	1	6	4	7	5
5	4	1	9	3	7	8	2	6

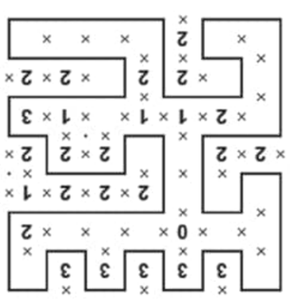
ALPHA TRIANGLE

V, VE, Rev, Over, Dover, Droves, Vendors.

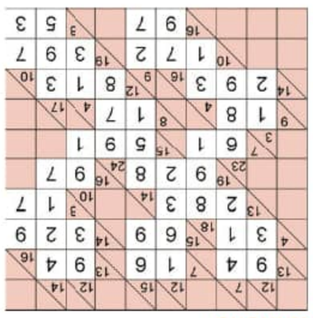
GO FIGURE

Easy
6 − 4 − 3 + 5 = 4
Medium
6 − 8 + 9 + 3 = 10
Hard
4 − 7 + 5 + 2 = 4

LOOP



KAKURO



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 # Big Tamil filmmakers move south
Top Tamil directors like Atlee and Lokesh Kanagaraj are turning to Telugu cinema due to wider pan-India reach, stronger infrastructure, and commercially viable large-scale projects

SANDALWOOD SHOTS
Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Surya song sensation

The team of the Kannada movie Surya has been busy making arrangements for its release. As part of the promotional activities, a romantic song – Baare Baare Aththana Magale – was unveiled. Rendered by Hemanth Kumar and Pruthvi Bhat, the song has already become popular among music lovers.

Surya is scheduled for release on Friday across the state, supported by Ravi Benne Brothers under the Nandi Cinemas banner.

Helmed by director Sagar, the movie revolves around a youth born and brought up in a slum. "The story follows a young man who succeeds in joining hands with his sweetheart to lead a happy married life. "Though the shooting was held in Bengaluru, the dialogues are laced with North Karnataka diction," he said.

Actor Ravishankar, known for villain roles, appreciated the director for the movie's quality. "I shared the screen with veteran actress Shruthi. This is my second movie with her, my previous one being College Kumar. The climax of Surya is loaded with sentiment, and Prashanth has acted well," he said.

Meanwhile, female lead Harshita said she enjoys the song Baare Baare Aththana Magale very much. "I played a college student in the movie and feel lucky to share the screen with veteran actors Ravishankar and Shruthi," she added.

Women director spotlight

Sandalwood has relatively few women directors, making new additions significant. Recently, CR Bobby directed the Kannada film Just Married. Now, N Jyothi Lakshmi becomes the woman director in Karnataka's film industry. "I am happy to direct this movie, which explores domestic issues, especially the bonding between a husband and his better half. I earlier organised reality shows for private television channels. During Covid-19, I came across a script written by Akarsh, which I found interesting. We decided to make the film Bayakegalu Beruridaaga," said debutante director N Jyothi Lakshmi.

She added that the team conducted rehearsals and workshops to sharpen

the actors' performances. According to her, Bayakegalu Beruridaaga reflects the emotions and desires of a homemaker when her husband becomes absorbed in work. The film aims to resonate with audiences.

Akarsh, the protagonist, has acted in television serials, while Sharanya, the female lead, is known for her performance in the Kannada film Nathicharami. The movie is planned for release in the first week of February and has won awards overseas, besides a digital screening at Cannes Film Festival 2025.

Priyanka's fierce pirate avatar

Blood-soaked sands witness Priyanka Chopra battling ruthless pirates for survival and hidden treasure

Priyanka Chopra has officially dropped the first trailer of her upcoming film The Bluff and going by the early reactions, fans have a lot to look forward to. Keeping to schedule, the actress took to her handle on Wednesday night to drop the first trailer of her upcoming action-adventure. Sharing the clip, she wrote, "This only ends with the sand soaked in blood. The Bluff is coming to @PrimeVideo February 25. 2026."

'The Bluff' trailer out

Much like the early stills, the film features Priyanka in an action-packed avatar, getting bloodied and bruised as she faces off against menacing pirates and leaves behind a trail of bodies, all while protecting her 'treasure'. Starring opposite her is Karl Urban, who takes on the role of the antagonist. The trailer teases a high-stakes battle set against a gritty backdrop of the 1800s in the Caribbean. From slicing up people to engaging in fierce sword fights, the film, with its emotional core, offers a darker, more violent spin on classic pirate tales.

Fan's reaction

Social media quickly filled with enthusiastic reactions. One fan praised Chopra's journey from Bollywood to Hollywood, writing, "From The Bluffmaster (2005) to The Bluff (2026), what a journey." Another comment read, "Had me at Karl Urban and Priyanka. Then you throw in pirates and the people behind the Extraction movies — you have my attention."

Production debut

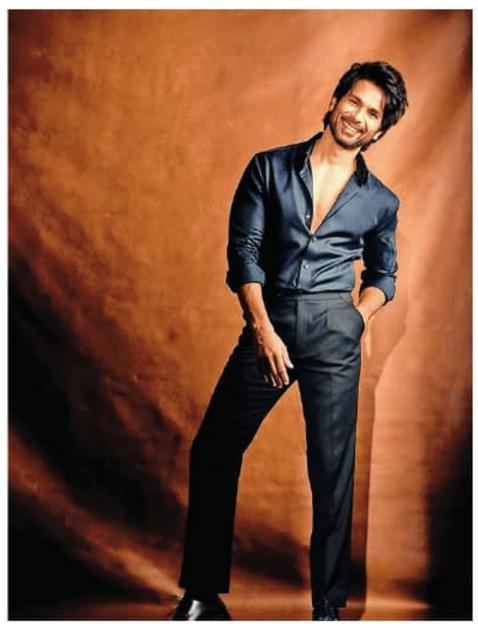
The Bluff reportedly marks Priyanka's production debut in Hollywood. The actress, who has previously backed several regional films in India, revealed the exciting news at the Golden Globe Awards. The film is also being backed by The Russo Brothers, who are gearing up to release their big-ticket superhero film Avengers: Doomsday later this year. Priyanka and the Russo Brothers have worked together in the past on the series Citadel. While the team reportedly shot for the second season, there has been no update on the same.

—ETimes

Shahid prioritises kids' normalcy

Shahid Kapoor shields kids Misha and Zain from fame, prioritising normalcy despite his stardom. In an interview, he shared that he keeps conversations about celebrity life minimal as his children slowly grow more aware of his profession. He consciously avoids the "star" label at home, believing authenticity matters more than image. On the work front, he will next be seen in Vishal Bhardwaj's O' Romeo, which is scheduled for release on February 13.

Shahid takes deliberate steps to protect his daughter Misha and son Zain from unnecessary public attention. While he knows they will eventually recognise his popularity, he places greater importance on giving them a grounded and regular childhood. Along with his wife Mira Rajput, a businesswoman, he focuses on creating a balanced environment for his family. He said he wants them to stay as close to normalcy as possible. As they grow older and become more aware, he prefers not to



highlight his stardom unless questions arise, choosing instead to answer honestly and responsibly as a parent.

The actor also distances himself from the "star" tag, admitting that fame can feel excessive and distracting at times, and believes staying grounded helps him personally and professionally every single day.

— ETimes

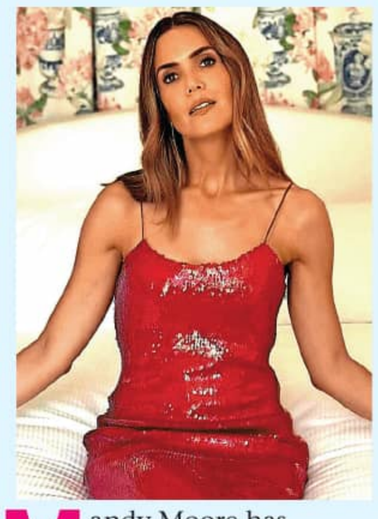
Akshay's viral generous gesture

Bollywood actor Akshay Kumar won praise on social media after his video from a polling booth during the BMC elections 2026 went viral. In the clip, he was seen leaving the polling station and heading to his car, but was stopped by a girl pleading for help.

The video shows the actor, dressed in a shirt and baggy pants, walking toward his car when the girl reportedly asked for help, saying her family was in debt. He requested she leave her contact details, then proceeded to his car when she bent down to touch his feet. Akshay is known for his philanthropic deeds. Speaking to reporters afterward, he urged citizens to actively participate in the democratic process. "Everyone must vote. We often complain about water supply, electricity, bad roads, garbage, and other civic problems. Now it is our turn to act. If Mumbai truly wants to be a hero, it is not about slogans or dialogues, just come and vote," he said.

Meanwhile, polling across the 29 municipal corporations began at 7.30 am and will continue until 5.30 pm. Voting is being held for 2,801 seats after 68 candidates were elected unopposed. Counting of votes is scheduled for January 16.

—ETimes



Friendships after motherhood

Mandy Moore has opened about how motherhood has reshaped her friendships, sparking renewed attention amid the recent buzz around Ashley Tisdale's much-discussed mom-group drama. Without directly referencing any controversy, Moore reflected candidly on the natural shifts that occur when people move into different phases of life, especially after becoming a parent. Now a mother of three, she explained that she has naturally grown closer to people who are in the same parenting stage as her. While she still values friends whose lives look different, the rhythms of daily life and shared experiences have shifted those relationships.

Moore described the process as a kind of quiet mourning—not for the friendships themselves, but for what they once were. She emphasised that this change is not rooted in conflict or resentment, but simply in growth and circumstance. Her reflections highlighted a reality many parents face: friendships can change shape over time, and accepting that evolution can be both emotional and necessary.

— ETimes